

XIV.—*The Birds of Tasso and adjoining Islands of the Rokelle River, Sierra Leone.* By WILLOUGHBY P. LOWE, M.B.O.U. With Notes by DAVID A. BANNERMAN, B.A., M.B.O.U.

(Text-figure 3.)

Preface.—By D. A. BANNERMAN.

THE collection of birds obtained by Mr. W. P. Lowe in Sierra Leone in the early spring of 1920 comprises 207 skins, representing 118 species and subspecies. As Mr. Lowe has explained in his introductory remarks, the collection was made principally on the three islands—Tasso, Mâyahgba, and Yatward—which lie in the wide mouth of the Rokelle River; these islands have never been explored, and it has therefore been thought advisable to give a complete list of the birds known to inhabit each. The position of these islands will be seen by referring to the map (text-figure 3) which has been specially prepared by Lieut. Mansergh, R.N., of H.M.S. 'Dwarf.' During his comparatively short stay in Sierra Leone, Mr. Lowe was successful in adding a number of species to the list of Sierra Leone birds hitherto unrecorded from the Colony. All were obtained, unless the contrary is noted, viz. :—*Ortygospiza atricollis ansorgei*, *Antichromus minutus minutus*, † *Cisticola terrestris* subsp. undetermined, *Cisticola rufopileata rufopileata*, *Pentholœa frontalis*, *Bradyornis murinus modestus*, *Batis senegalensis togoensis*, *Tchitreia viridis viridis*, *Riparia riparia riparia*, *Clamator glandarius*, *Centropus francisi*, *Micropus æquatorialis lowei*, subsp. nov., *Lophoceros nasutus nasutus*, *Bycanistes fistulator*, *Bubo africanus cinerascens*, **Aquila wahlbergi*, **Spizaëtus coronatus*, **Cuncuma vocifer*, *Circæetus cinereus*, **Pandion haliaëtus*

* Not obtained, but identified without a doubt.

† A single specimen only was obtained; recently we have received a further single specimen in breeding-plumage from Major Scovil, R.A. The bird is most nearly allied to *C. t. eximia*, Heugl., and, when a series are obtained, will probably prove to belong to an undescribed race.

haliaëtus, **Pelecanus* sp. uncertain, **Ardea goliath*, *Melanophox ardesiaca*, *Ardeola ibis ibis*, *Tringa ferruginea ferruginea*, *Totanus totanus*, *Rhyacophilus glareola*, **Squatarola squatarola*, *Larus fuscus fuscus*, *Sterna* sp. not yet determined, *Hydrochelidon nigra*, *Hydrochelidon hybrida*, *Numida meleagris*.

When it is remembered that Mr. Lowe spent under three months in the Colony, the fact that he could procure or identify without a doubt thirty-two birds, which, despite the labours of Mr. Robin Kemp, Major Kelsall, and others, had never previously been recorded from Sierra Leone, speaks volumes for the work still to be done in West Africa, and not a little for the untiring energy and discrimination with which Mr. Lowe faced his task.

Special mention must here be made of the new Giant Swift, which Mr. Lowe discovered. A single specimen was shot at Mahera up the Rokelle River (see Map), and Mr. Lowe tells me that this Swift was very common in the neighbourhood of the village, and had he had more than one cartridge he could have secured a fine series. The birds were nesting at the time of his visit, 21 April. The discovery of this bird in Sierra Leone is of very special interest, as hitherto no specimen of any race of the Giant Swift has been obtained in this part of Africa. The typical species inhabits Abyssinia and probably extends south through the great lakes. More than one race has been described, and, almost at the same time as Mr. Lowe shot his bird, Capt. Hubert Lynes, R.N., procured yet another race in Darfur in almost the same latitude as Sierra Leone. I have already described *M. w. lowei* at length in the 'Bulletin' of the Brit. Orn. Club, vol. xli., October 1920, p. 2. Additional specimens are badly needed in the British Museum. The bird cannot be mistaken for any other Swift, as the wing measures 204 mm.

Another bird of very great interest, which does not strictly come within the scope of this paper, may, nevertheless, well be mentioned here. It is a small Rail which flew on board

* Not obtained, but identified without a doubt.

H.M.S. 'Dwarf,' in lat. $10^{\circ} 0' N.$, long. $15^{\circ} 30' W.$, on June 14th, 1920, while the gunboat was at sea off Portuguese Guinea. Mr. Lowe skinned the little bird, and it proved to be a new race, which I named *Sarothrura bohmi danei* in honour of Lieut.-Commander Dane, R.N., of H.M.S. 'Dwarf' (*cf.* Bull. B. O. C. vol. xli., Oct. 1920, p. 3).

Another bird, the identification of which has been anything but easy, figures in my list as *Sterna* [species undetermined] ?*dougalli*, Mont. The Roseate Tern. This is a most remarkable specimen, which has puzzled several ornithologists to whom I have submitted it. Dr. Hartert has, I believe, come nearest to identifying the bird; he writes "I should describe it as a gigantic specimen of *Sterna dougalli* with abnormally deep cleft feet." He notes that *Sterna dougalli gracilis* of Australia sometimes has wings as long as this. Unfortunately, the Tern under discussion, which Mr. Lowe shot in Freetown Harbour on the 5th May, 1920, is an immature female, apparently about eleven months old, with bill and feet black. The primaries are very worn, and the shafts broken off at the end; and taking this fact into consideration the wing-measurement of 233 mm. is remarkable. Had the wings not been damaged, the measurement would have been somewhere between 235-240 mm. The bird is in full moult, and has attained its new tail-feathers and some of the secondaries. If it is indeed a specimen of the Roseate Tern, its occurrence so late as May in Sierra Leone is difficult to explain. The bird is recorded from one or two localities on the East African coast as far as Cape Town, but I know of no example having been taken in West Africa. Mr. Willoughby Lowe believes that it will prove to be a resident and probably distinct breeding-race, but until its breeding-ground is discovered nothing further can be done. I would specially draw the attention of any ornithologist who may be quartered at Freetown to securing more specimens, and particularly of ascertaining whether any Roseate Terns visit Freetown Harbour.

Mr. Lowe has reported the existence on Tasso Island of a fine Ground-Hornbill (*Bucorvus*), which from his description

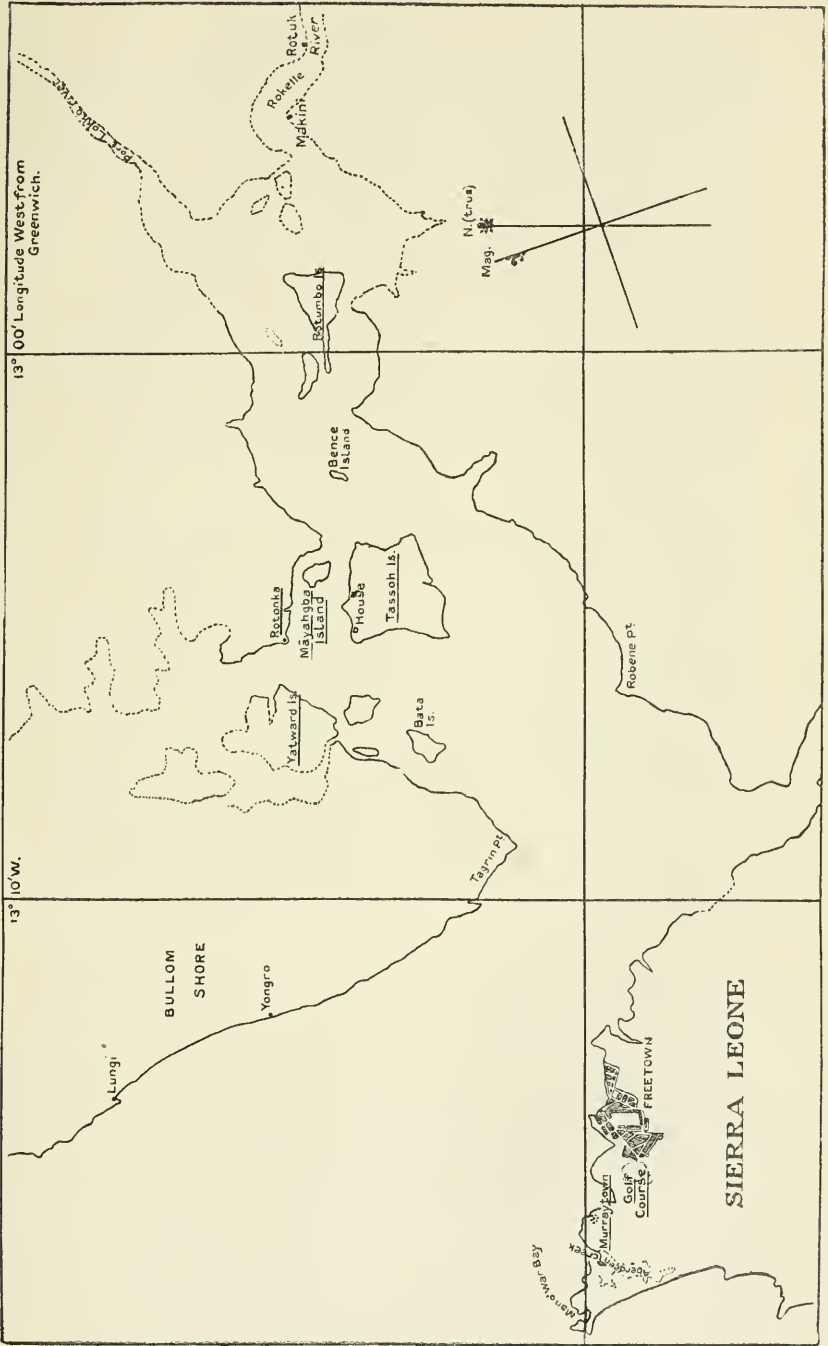
appears to be an undescribed species. It is an enormous bird, a pair of which were seen by Mr. Lowe on more than one occasion, and is remarkable for the fact that it is *entirely* black, lacking the white primaries of *B. abyssinicus* and *B. cafer*. As no example of *Bucorvus* with black primaries is known to exist anywhere in Africa, a specimen should be secured at the earliest opportunity.

I wish to take this opportunity of expressing the great appreciation felt by the authorities of the Natural History Museum to Commander Dane, R.N., for so generously taking Mr. Willoughby Lowe with him as naturalist on his ship. Much of the material obtained by Mr. Lowe (including a large collection of birds from Lagos, Southern Nigeria) still remains to be worked out, but it will be apparent from a perusal of this paper how much valuable work Mr. Lowe has accomplished, thanks very largely to the facilities afforded by Commander Dane, who spared no pains or personal expense to make the trip a success. The new Rail and a fine Antelope have been named after him as a small recognition of his kindness.

Introduction.—By WILLOUGHBY P. LOWE, M.B.O.U.

Having been kindly invited by Lieut.-Commander A. Y. Dane, R.N., of H.M.S. 'Dwarf,' to accompany him in his gunboat to the West Coast of Africa, I found myself once again off Freetown, Sierra Leone, on 25 February, 1920. My first object was to try and complete the collection made on my last visit of 1911 whilst the guest of Capt. Hardy, R.N., of H.M.S. 'Mutine.' It was now arranged that I should stay on the high ground at Hill Station, and from this point many new additions to my former collection were made, as well as new records to the list of known Sierra Leone birds. Having about exhausted the birds found in the immediate neighbourhood of Freetown, it was with much interest and pleasure that Commander Dane and myself left the ship early on March 12 for the zoologically unexplored Rokelle River and its numerous islands. We arrived at Tasso Island (text-fig. 3) about 11 A.M. An empty bungalow was to be had, and

Text-figure 3.



Sketch-map of the Rokelle River and its Islands, Sierra Leone.

here I settled down to work—chiefly on Tasso Island,—but paying a few short visits to Yatward, Mâyahgba, Rotoombo, and other islands, as well as a day's sail up the Rokelle River to Mabile, where the river becomes more narrow and difficult of passage on account of the large rocks in the river-bed. It was here that I saw on 16 April a Kori Bustard, which almost without doubt was *Otis kori struthiunculus*. So far as I know, no Kori Bustard has been recorded from the West Coast, and it is therefore possible that, had I obtained a specimen, it would have proved to belong to an undescribed race—possibly a dark form of the North-African Kori Bustard. I also came across a small dry pond where the bird dusted itself, and was able to examine many feathers from the wings.

On my return I stayed at Mahera, and it was here I discovered the new Giant Swift (*Micropus aequatorialis lowei*), which Mr. Bannerman has described, in abundance.

I shall now confine myself chiefly to Tasso Island. It may be of interest to say that the word Tasso means “a resting-place,” where all the native boats stop on their journeys up and down the river waiting for wind and tide. Mâyahgba means “shaky island”—possibly on account of the wind; Yatward was named after a chief of the island; whilst the large long island of Rotoomba, which swarms with game and is nearly all covered with thick bush, means “goat island,” on account of the so-called “Bush-Goats” (*Cephalopus niger*), which seem to occur here and not on any of the other islands.

The rather important village of Tasso is at the north-west corner of the island, and is one of the few spots not surrounded by a dense belt of mangroves. It was, no doubt, like Bense Island, a stronghold of the Dutch and Portuguese slavers—as the still remaining old cannons half buried in sand prove. The island is roughly about three by four miles in extent and distant a mile from the mainland. It is probably about 60 ft. high and, like the mainland, of volcanic origin. It has a light sandy soil, and is for the most part covered with low scrubby bush, which is burnt

periodically for farming purposes. The trees of any size are scanty : a few very fine cotton-woods are found around the village, the remainder seem to have been all used for making dug-out canoes. There are, however, some oil-palm trees at the southern end of the island, the favourite resort of bats and parrots.

Tasso may be said to differ in one respect from the other islands by having two very large ponds, one of which was dry when I arrived and the other nearly so. These seem to be the only natural supply of fresh water, and during the autumn they are frequented by large quantities of water-fowl. It is therefore more than probable that Tasso will be found to have a far greater variety of birds than any of the other islands. The chief interest to the ornithologist respecting these islands lies in the fact that so many birds found on the high mainland are conspicuous by their absence. Take, for instance, only two very noticeable ones—the Plantain-eater (*Turacus macrorhynchus*), whose noisy habits and brilliant plumage is at once missed, or again the lovely little Blue Flycatcher (*Platystira cyanea*), so well known and loved by all white people who visit the Colony.

I am here giving a complete list of the birds obtained on this and other islands, as well as those seen and whose identification is beyond doubt.

I am greatly indebted to Mr. David A. Bannerman for having named the collection, and for compiling a complete list of Sierra Leone birds, which will not only be useful to compare with the island lists here given, but will also be of great service to those who will continue the interesting study of Sierra Leone birds. I have also to thank Lieut. M. J. Mansergh, R.N., of H.M.S. 'Dwarf,' for preparing this the first correct map of the little-known Rokelle River and its islands. There are still, doubtless, many birds in Sierra Leone which have not yet been recorded, but Mr. Bannerman's list will at least bring our knowledge of Sierra Leone birds up to date.

An asterisk denotes that the bird was seen beyond doubt, but no skins were preserved.

*List of the Birds of Tasso Island, Rokelle River,
Sierra Leone, with Field-notes.*

Corvus scapulatus. Pied Crow.

On Tasso Island during March these birds were very scarce, only an odd bird was to be seen. During April their numbers greatly increased, and small flocks of twenty were to be seen.

Cinnyricinclus leucogaster leucogaster. Amethyst Starling.

Fairly common on Tasso Island. A pair were nesting in a hollow stump of a dead sapling, two feet high, on 10 April. A single well-fledged bird was found in the hole, one foot deep. There was no sign of any nest.

Hyphantornis cucullatus. Rufous-necked Weaver.

Quite common and nesting in a cottonwood tree on 18 March.

Sitagra ocularius brachypterus. Swainson's Spectacled Weaver.

Not nearly so plentiful as the former species.

Budytes flava flava. Yellow Wagtail.

Several seen on the pond near the village, which was nearly dried up.

Anthus leucophrys gouldi. Gould's Pipit.

A common bird amongst the cassava, where it nests.

Cyanomitra verticalis verticalis. Green-headed Olive Sunbird.

Tolerably common, but much more plentiful on the mainland.

Cinnyris chloropygius chloropygius. Scarlet-collared Sunbird.

This beautiful little Sunbird is, no doubt, the commonest species.

Anthothreptes gabonica. Little Brown-and-white Sunbird.
Moderately common about Tasso village, in company with the former species.

Cisticola lateralis. Grass-Warbler.

A fairly common species, possessing a beautiful song, which is uttered in the early morning from the top of some small bush. The same spot is used daily for this purpose.

Prinia mystacea melanorhyncha. Black-billed Wren-Warbler.

Noticed sparingly in March amongst low bush.

Hylia prasina. Cassin's Warbler.

One shot 9 April, but unfortunately not recovered. They are moderately common in thick bush.

Pycnonotus barbatus inornatus. Dusky Bulbul.

A pair of these birds used to sing behind our bungalow; they were the only ones seen.

Phyllastrephus simplex. The Plain Bulbul.

Tolerably common. Breeding 17 March.

Campophaga phœnicea. Red-shouldered Cuckoo-Shrike.

I only met with two (both young birds).

**Hirundo rustica rustica*. Common Swallow.

Swallows were irregular during the latter part of March. Some days only two or three were seen, whilst another day they were numerous and in fairly large flocks.

Dendropicus lugubris. Mournful Woodpecker.

A well-fledged bird was brought to me on 14 April by a child whose father had cut down a small dead tree. I could not get the child to part with it.

Crinifer africana africana. African Plantain-eater.

Only noticed twice. The first time three were observed in some thick bush and two specimens were secured.

Clamator glandarius. Great Spotted Cuckoo.

Not common. The oviduct of one shot on 31 March contained an egg.

Centropus senegalensis senegalensis. Senegal Coucal.
One of the commonest birds, occurring everywhere.

Ceuthmochares aereus flavirostris. Yellow-billed Coucal.
A fairly common bird.

Tachornis parvus brachypterus. Short-winged Palm-Swift.
One of the most common birds.

Scotornis climacurus. Long-tailed Nightjar.

This is quite a common bird. On 16 March I found a bird sitting on some reddish-coloured ground amongst the cassava. I went close up to it and it refused to move until I practically touched it with my hand, when it flew away a short distance, leaving two eggs, which were brought home. Their colour matched the ground wonderfully well.

Lophoceros semifasciatus. Half-barred Hornbill.
Tolerably common.

Bycanistes fistulator. Piping Hornbill.
Moderately common and noticed feeding on berries.

***Bucorvus** sp. ? Ground-Hornbill.

A pair of Ground-Hornbills inhabited the island. Unfortunately, I was not able to obtain a specimen, though I and others saw them many times. In size they resemble *B. abyssinicus*, but differ from that bird in being entirely black throughout, including the head and neck. They are known to the natives as "Woodcock," and are said to occur on the mainland, but I failed to find any. The beat of the wing is audible at a considerable distance.

[It seems very probable that the Ground-Hornbill seen by Mr. Lowe on Tasso Island will prove to be an entirely new, undescribed species. A race (if recognised as such) of *B. abyssinicus* is certainly known to inhabit parts of West Africa, and is recorded by Reichenow from Portuguese Guinea. This form was named by Schlegel "*Buceros carunculatus*, var. *guineensis*," on account of its supposed smaller size etc., but Reichenow ('Vögel Afrikas,' ii. p. 234)

does not accept it. In any case, this West-African bird resembles the Abyssinian species in having *white* primaries, whereas the bird Mr. Lowe saw had entirely *black* primaries. Should any naturalist or sportsman have an opportunity of procuring one of these birds, the chance should not be neglected; and may I beg him to forward the skin to the Director, British Museum (Natural History), London, S.W., where it will be most gratefully received, tying on to its feet a label bearing the locality where obtained, date, and name of collector, and, if possible, the sex of the bird.—*D. A. B.*]

Merops persicus chrysocercus West-African Persian Bee-eater.

On 13 March only a single bird was to be seen, whilst on 25 March they were tolerably common, flying about the large pond at back of Tasso village.

Aerops albicollis albicollis. White-necked Bee-eater.
Tolerably common on Tasso Island, 22 March.

***Eurystomus afer afer.** Cinnamon Roller.
Common. A very pugnacious bird, attacking anything that comes near its favourite haunt.

Halcyon malimbicus forbesi. Forbes's Kingfisher.
Tolerably common.

***Ceryle rudis rudis.** Pied Kingfisher.
Fairly common around the island.

Psittacus erithacus timneh. Timneh Grey Parrot.
Heard nearly every morning at daybreak flying over the village of Tasso. They were tolerably common at the southern end of the island, feeding on palm-nuts.

Bubo africanus cinerascens. Greyish-spotted Eagle-Owl.
I only saw two of these birds; they were in some very tall mangrove-trees. The one shot had been feeding on rodents. Two young birds were obtained at Freetown, and were sent to the Zoological Gardens, London, where they are doing well.

Otus leucotis leucotis. White-faced Scops Owl.

Some children found a nest on 29 March in the fork of a large mango-tree. It contained two young birds which were just able to fly, one of which was caught and subsequently went to the Zoological Gardens. The site chosen was ten feet from the ground, and there was no sign of any nest, the tiny young birds merely sitting among a few bones and pellets. The bird when caught had quite a brownish shade overlaid with sulphur-yellow. After a few weeks of captivity this disappeared. I visited this bird at the Gardens on 5 September, not having seen it for many months. I was pleased to find it remembered me, although very sleepy, and frequently responded to my call.

Buteo auguralis. Lesser Augur-Buzzard.

Found nesting in a cottonwood-tree about forty feet up. On 8 April I shot the female, which was alarmed for the safety of her young. On the following day I visited the nest and found the male had obtained another mate to assist in rearing the young. This seems very often to happen, and I have noticed it even amongst Orioles in America.

***Aquila wahlbergi.** Wahlberg's Eagle.

One seen several times near Tasso, perched and flying. Evidently uncommon, as it was the only one noticed.

[Mr. Lowe cannot have made any mistake in the identification of this species. We have a skin in the British Museum, obtained at Bissao, Portuguese Guinea (ex Verreaux Collection), so that there is little doubt Mr. Lowe correctly identified his bird.—*D. A. B.*]

***Cuncuma vocifer.** Vociferous Sea-Eagle.

Tolerably common up the Rokelle River. Several times seen perched or flying on or around Tasso Island.

[This seems to be the first record from Sierra Leone. We have specimens in the Museum from Senegal and Cameroon.—*D. A. B.*]

***Kaupifalco monogrammicus monogrammicus.** African Buzzard-Eagle.

Several seen. A fairly common bird.

**Gypohierax angolensis*. Vulturine Sea-Eagle.

A very common and conspicuous bird, and much liked by the natives for food.

**Pandion haliaëtus haliaëtus*. Osprey.

Seen several times at the southern end of the island, where the natives have fish-traps.

**Necrosyrtes monachus monachus*. Hooded Vulture.

Abundant in and around the village of Tasso. The difference between these Vultures and those of British East Africa struck me as curious. We often shot Antelope and left them in a tree or by the roadside, and they were never molested; whilst in British East Africa Vultures appear at once when game is killed, and, if not carefully guarded, soon commence to devour it.

[An immature female specimen of this Vulture, no. 562, now in the British Museum, obtained by Mr. Lowe at Murray town, Sierra Leone, on 27 April, 1920, is in very peculiar "head dress." I have never seen any Vulture in this state of plumage, and, as I can find no description of it in any paper, I describe it as follows:—Skin of the head immediately above the eye and below the eye absolutely bare of feathers, the bare skin divided on the top of the head by very short black feathers growing in tiny hair-like tufts, these black feathers dividing and passing over the base of the skull so as to completely encircle a pure white fluffy tuft measuring 38×10 mm. Both the eyes and the ears are surrounded with black hair-like feathers. The hind neck, from the base of the occiput to the commencement of the long feathers on the nape, is covered with close, almost fur-like, buff-coloured feathers. The lower part of the throat and the under sides of the neck are entirely bare of feathers, and only the skin from the base of the lower mandible for a distance of 55 mm. is covered with numerous small black hair-like tufts. At the extreme base of the neck on the under surface, and below the bare patch, there is a patch of rather long dark brown feathers, dividing the bare

patch of the lower neck from the short brown feathers of the breast.—*D. A. B.*]

***Pelecanus** sp. uncertain.

One or two Pelicans were noticed daily, either flying or fishing off the mud-flats. I was unfortunately unable to obtain a specimen, but they were probably *P. onocrotalus sharpei*.

[It does not yet seem to have been settled definitely whether the Pelican of West Africa (*terra typica*, Angola), named *P. sharpei* by Bocage, is a distinct subspecies or merely a colour-variety. Dr. Reichenow inclines to the latter view (*Vög. Afr.* i. p. 100). Apparently more specimens are badly required in the National Collection.—*D. A. B.*]

Scopus umbretta umbretta. Hammer-head Stork.

Several seen wading about on the pond in company with *Bubulcus ibis*. I saw none elsewhere.

Ardea cinerea. Common Heron.

I only saw the one obtained, but I have no doubt they are tolerably common.

Demigretta gularis gularis. White-throated Slaty Heron.

Early in March these birds are very plentiful, but towards April their numbers are greatly decreased. At Freetown they nearly all disappear to their breeding-ground, wherever that may be, and only an odd straggler is left behind.

Ardeola ibis ibis. Buff-backed Egret.

Very common on the pond. Sometimes as many as fifty seen together.

Rhyacophilus glareola. Wood-Sandpiper.

Common on the beach and also noted in mangrove-swamps.

Tringa ferruginea ferruginea. Curlew-Sandpiper.

Only noticed along the beach, where it is fairly common. It does not appear to have been recorded from Sierra Leone previously.

**Numenius arquatus arquatus*. Curlew.

Abounds along mud-flats.

Numenius phaeopus phaeopus. Whimbrel.

A very common bird, whose numbers become much reduced by the end of April. A few were seen on 23 May, whilst a single bird was seen near Freetown on 20 June.

Squatarola squatarola. Grey Plover.

A common species, retreating at high water to the mangrove-branches in company with other Waders.

Arenaria interpres interpres. Turnstone.

Common along the shores at low water. When the tide rises they, as well as other Waders, take refuge in the tall mangroves, where one may find lots of fifty or more all huddled together.

**Larus cirrhocephalus*. Grey-headed Gull.

The most common Gull. Very numerous at Freetown during the winter, but they nearly all depart for their breeding-grounds in the interior in April.

**Larus fuscus affinis*. British Lesser Black-backed Gull.

It is obviously the light-backed race of this Gull which occurs sparingly off Tasso Island. Common at Freetown as late as 11 May, at which date only two or three used, in company with a single *Larus cirrhocephalus*, to visit our ship daily. No actual specimen was obtained during this visit.

Larus fuscus fuscus. Continental Lesser Black-backed Gull.

A single specimen of the dark-backed race of this Gull was obtained on 11 May at Freetown.

[The specimen obtained on 11 May is undoubtedly an example of the dark-backed race, *Larus fuscus fuscus*. It is, of course, far out of the supposed range of this species, which is usually considered to be Scandinavia and eastwards (breeding). In winter it visits the eastern Mediterranean,

ranging to the head of the Persian Gulf. I have, however, known the dark race to occur once in the Canary Islands (*cf.* Ibis, 1920, p. 757), so that apparently stragglers may be looked for on the West Coast of Africa, where there can be no limit to its wanderings. Undoubtedly the note supplied by Mr. Lowe must apply to the British Lesser Black-backed Gull (*Larus fuscus affinis*), which is known to winter in the western Mediterranean, in the Azores, Madeira, and Canary Islands, passing down the West African coast as far as Southern Nigeria. Mr. Lowe has himself obtained a specimen of the light-backed race in Sierra Leone on a former trip: this was recorded by myself (Ibis, 1912, p. 229) as *L. fuscus*.—*D. A. B.*]

**Sterna maxima*. Giant Tern.

A flock of about fifty were seen daily off the shore.

Streptopelia semitorquata erythrophrys. Red-eyed Turtle-Dove.

Very common. Young birds, well-fledged, were obtained 9 April.

**Chalcopelia afra afra*. Blue-spotted Wood-Dove.

Moderately common.

Vinago calva calva. Bald-fronted Fruit-Pigeon.

Scarce. Two or three seen in the tall mangroves.

Fancolinus bicalcaratus thornei. Thorne's Double-spurred Francolin.

This is undoubtedly by far the most common bird on the island. In the cassava it fairly swarms, coveys of thirty or more rising continuously as one walks through. They do a great deal of damage to the crops, and the natives, having no guns, are completely at the mercy of the bird. My last visit to their feeding-grounds, 23 May, showed they had paired and receded into the bush, as only an odd bird was to be seen, where a few weeks previously there were hundreds.

*List of the Birds of Mâyahya Island.****Tschagra senegala senegala.**

A single bird seen on 28 March.

***Cisticola lateralis.**

Tolerably common, and in full song on 28 March.

Platysteira cyanea cyanea.

Breeding on the island on 27 March, when a specimen was procured.

***Lybius bidentatus bidentatus.**

A single pair seen on 28 March.

***Centropus senegalensis senegalensis.**

Common.

***Lophoceros semifasciatus.**

Scarce. Only one seen.

***Bycanistes fistulator.**

A fairly common species.

***Merops persicus chrysocercus.**

Only two seen 27 March.

***Eurystomus afer afer.**

Only two or three seen.

***Astur badius sphenurus.**

A single pair seen.

***Spizaëtus coronatus.**

One seen perched on the dead branch of a tall tree on 28 March. Unfortunately, I was in the midst of an antelope drive, and so unable to shoot it.

[This is apparently the first record of *S. coronatus* from Sierra Leone. Mr. Lowe is well acquainted with this West African species, and his identification may be relied upon. We have West African specimens in the British Museum

from the Gold Coast and Cameroon, while Reichenow records it, in addition, from Portuguese Guinea, Liberia, and Cape Coast besides many localities in South Africa.—*D. A. B.*]

Demigretta gularis gularis.

****Ardea goliath.***

A single bird seen on 28 March.

[Curiously enough, this is apparently the first record of *A. goliath* from Sierra Leone. It is known from many parts of West Africa, and has an enormous range throughout the whole of tropical Africa.—*D. A. B.*]

Numenius arquatus arquatus.

Numenius phæopus phæopus.

****Francolinus bicalcaratus thornei.***

Very common.

****Numida meleagris.***

Only four seen. They are found with *Francolinus bicalcaratus thornei* in an open space in the centre of the island.

List of the Birds of Yatward Island.

Hyphantornis cucullatus.

**Hirundo rustica rustica.*

**Tachornis parvus brachypterus.*

Halcyon malimbicus forbesi.

**Psittacus erithacus timneh.*

**Astur badius sphenurus.*

**Milvus migrans parasitus.*

**Gypohierax angolensis.*

**Demigretta gularis gularis.*

**Butorides atricapilla.*

**Rhyacophilus glarcola.*

**Arenaria interpres interpres.*

**Sterna maxima.*